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CLMPTO

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CLAIMS 1-3 CANCELLED

4. (Currently Amended): Apparatus according to claim 1 wherein ~~said~~ the interior region comprises carbon dioxide so as to provide an air-free environment therein.

CLAIMS 5-8 CANCELLED

9. (Currently Amended): Apparatus according to claim 1 wherein ~~said~~ the top end of said main body ~~includes~~ comprises a mount, ~~wherein~~ and said cover is removably attachable to said mount on said main body.

CLAIMS 10-14 CANCELLED

15. (Original): Apparatus according to claim 1 wherein said cover comprises a port therein, said port being configured to permit access between said exterior region and said interior region of said main body.

CLAIM 16 CANCELLED

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17. (Currently Amended): Apparatus according to claim ~~15~~ 1 wherein ~~said~~ the port comprises an entire Luer lock fitting.

18. (Currently Amended): Apparatus according to claim ~~15~~ 1 wherein ~~said~~ the port comprises an instrument passageway.

19. (Original): Apparatus according to claim 18 wherein said instrument passageway comprises a penetrable seal.

20. (Original): Apparatus according to claim 1 wherein said cover comprises a substantially rigid material.

21. (Original): Apparatus according to claim 20 wherein said substantially rigid material comprises polycarbonate.

22. (Currently Amended): Apparatus according to claim 1 wherein ~~said~~ the ~~sealing means~~ comprises a vacuum seal.

23. (Currently Amended): Apparatus according to claim 1 wherein ~~said~~ ~~sealing~~ the securing means comprises hooks.

CLAIMS 24-27 CANCELLED

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CLAIMS 1-16 (Cancelled)

17. (Currently Amended) A method for delivering a substance to a ~~subcutaneous target site blood vessel~~, said method comprising:

percutaneously introducing an access tube to an implanted port having a flow passageway with an upstream end, a downstream end, and a valve element in the flow passageway and integrally formed with the port, wherein the access tube is introduced to seat in the passage but does not engage the valve element ~~and wherein the flow passage is connected directly to the blood vessel~~; and

introducing said substance into the flow passage through the access tube at a pressure sufficient to open the valve element to permit flow through the flow passageway to the ~~target site blood vessel~~.

18. (Original) A method as in claim 17 further comprising repeatedly accessing the implanted port with said access tube through the same access tract at intervals and over a time period sufficient to cause scar tissue formation over the access tract.

19. (Original) A method as in claim 17 further comprising locating said implanted port by manually aligning the access tube with a line from the skin entry point of an access tract to the aperture on the port.

20. (Previously presented) A method as in claim 17 further comprising locating the port by manually feeling the port to determine the position of the aperture.

21. (Previously presented) A method as in claim 17, wherein percutaneously introducing further comprises introducing the access tube through a skin layer overlying the implanted port having a thickness in the range from 1 mm to 20 mm.

22. (Original) A method as in claim 17, wherein the access tube comprises a blunt cannula.

23. (Original) A method as in claim 17, wherein the introducing step comprises orienting the access tube generally vertically with respect to the skin surface.

CLAIMS 24-27 (Cancelled)

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CLAIMS 1-16 (Cancelled)

17. (Currently Amended) A method for delivering a substance to a ~~subcutaneous target site blood vessel~~, said method comprising:
percutaneously introducing an access tube to an implanted port having a flow passageway with an upstream end, a downstream end, and a valve element in the flow passageway and integrally formed with the port, wherein the access tube is introduced to rest in the passage but does not engage the valve element ~~and wherein the flow passage is connected directly to the blood vessel~~; and
introducing said substance into the flow passage through the access tube at a pressure sufficient to open the valve element to permit flow through the flow passageway to the ~~target site blood vessel~~.

18. (Original) A method as in claim 17 further comprising repeatedly accessing the implanted port with said access tube through the same access tract at intervals and over a time period sufficient to cause scar tissue formation over the access tract.

19. (Original) A method as in claim 17 further comprising locating said implanted port by manually aligning the access tube with a line from the skin entry point of an access tract to the aperture on the port.

20. (Previously presented) A method as in claim 17 further comprising locating the port by manually feeling the port to determine the position of the aperture.

21. (Previously presented) A method as in claim 17, wherein percutaneously introducing further comprises introducing the access tube through a skin layer overlying the implanted port having a thickness in the range from 3 mm to 20 mm.

22. (Original) A method as in claim 17, wherein the access tube comprises a blunt cannula.

23. (Original) A method as in claim 17, wherein the introducing step comprises orienting the access tube generally vertically with respect to the skin surface.

CLAIMS 24-27 (Cancelled)